1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

made of cane and bark-cloth, which were virtually masks; and Mr. C. H. Karius informs me that he has seen on the river Waria what we should definitely call masked dancers, whose mask was once more of the same conical shape.

These particulars—the secrecy, the virtual disguise, also perhaps the use of palm-leaf skirts and mantles, and certainly the conical head-gear—all remind one of the masked dances of the Western Papuan, and in particular of the typical conical mask of the *'kaiva kuku'*. I would, therefore, put forward the very tentative suggestion that in the ceremonial dances of the Orokaiva we have a faint replica of the masked dance of the west. If this were so we should have a fair case for viewing the dance as a mortuary ceremony in which the dancers originally represented the spirits of the dead. For the present, however, this may be laid aside as no more than a conjecture.

The Drama: Stage Accessories

We may now turn our attention to the drama which always appears as a well-defined episode, and thus admits of separate treatment. I have used the word 'drama', despite its pretentious sound, because it is really the most non-committal; though 'mime' or 'farce' might have been more descriptive. As dialogue is almost completely absent, the expression 'dumb-show' would have been perhaps the most accurate of all. It is very difficult to discover a native word for the drama as abstracted from the remainder of the performance, i.e. the dance. The most satisfactory is *sesena* (Binandele *tetenya*) which means simply 'play', or 'play about'. Sometimes it is called *sonai-sesena*, 'the game played by the *sonai*'. Another word, of which I do not know the literal meaning, is *tebus*; and yet another—*yavetu*. It will be remembered that the play is proceeded or ushered in by the ballet. When the dance has been in progress for some ten minutes or more, the dancers suddenly leave in a body, retire into the bush near by, and reappear bearing the movable stage properties. These naturally vary according to the subject of the drama: they may, e.g., consist of a garden platform on which one of the actors is to sit, or a sago-log

4: Chinnery & Haddon E-5 (ca. 1915)1917
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

II.

A. C. Haddon.

The following article was written a year before receiving Mr Chinnery's communication. I think it advisable to let both papers appear together, as they throw light upon each other.

The natives of the Kumusi, and more especially of the Mambare Divisions, must be in an excited condition, for the new cults noted by Mr Chinnery do not seem to be related with the somewhat earlier cult to which I call attention, nor is there any evidence of the slightest connection between these and the abortive message of the Milne Bay "prophet." It is interesting to observe that M. Moszkowski[1] records a Messiah belief among the coast tribes of the Mamberamo, a river that opens by Cape D'Urville, in Netherlands New Guinea, at the eastern limit of Geelvink Bay. He says that there is everywhere met with amongst the coastal tribes a belief in Manseren Korēri, an ancient culture hero, and that the belief is certainly older than the first appearance of the missionaries. Very long ago there lived, according to this belief, a man endowed with supernatural and divine powers. He gave the Papuans laws and regulations, and founded the men's ceremonial houses. But, because the Papuans gradually neglected his commands, one day he vanished. Yet, so the legend runs, he will eventually return, and then everything will be renewed. Therefore is he called Manseren Korēri, the god at whose return everything will cast its skin.

An awakening of religious activity is a frequent characteristic of periods of social unrest. The weakening or disruption of the older social order may stimulate new and often bizarre ideals, and these may give rise to religious movements that strive to sanction social or political aspirations. Communities that feel themselves oppressed anticipate the emergence of a hero who will restore their prosperity and prestige. And when the people are imbued with religious fervour the expected hero will be regarded as a Messiah. Phenomena of this kind are well known in history, and are not unknown at the present day among peoples in all stages of civilisation.[2]

It is significant that even among the savages of New

[1] *Zeitsch. f. Ethnol.*, xliii., 1911, p. 327.

[2] The Ghost Dances of the Indians of the Plains of N. America, which partake of a Messianic character, may serve as an example.

4: Chinnery & Haddon E-5 (ca. 1915) 1917
OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

could desire,—money, flour, calico, tomahawks, knives, and so forth. White and coloured men were all alike and equal. In the beginning God gave all things to everyone on earth, but the good things of life had been filched by the white man, and as he would not restore to the natives the share that was due to them, the latter would be forced to help themselves. At the conclusion of the service the people saluted and prayed to God to give them good sense and more light. He was entreated to show them the right way to get money and other material benefits. The services take place twice a week, on Friday and Sunday nights. The people do not let the South Sea teacher see them, nor do they allow him to stop them. I gathered that some women also attend the meetings. One feature of the cult is a reversion to the ancient belief in the efficacy of certain inanimate objects to bring good fortune. A man on finding a rounded stone, or a stone of unusual shape, or with curious markings, or it may be some other arresting object, concludes that it has been given to him by the *Markai*. But, in order to satisfy himself, he takes it at night to one of the leaders and asks him to find out whether it is properly authenticated. The next morning he goes to a "German Wislin," who informs him that he has received a message from "German Town," stating the measure of virtue the object in question possesses. And he mentions the name of the person for whom the *Markai* designed the object, who, however, need not necessarily be the finder. On returning the stone the leader says, "God bless you. By-and-by something good will happen to you, and you will have more power." When the leaders instruct the people, or tell them about the stone, or whatever it may be, they do not fall into a trance or anything of that sort, but are wide awake, and speak in the ordinary way. Fees are charged for information and advice, and by these means the "German Wislins" are making the most of the occasion.

The cult has some resemblance to that which arose in Milne Bay, but there is not the slightest reason for thinking that the one has any connection with the other. Not only is there a considerable interval of time between them, there is also a considerable interval of space, Saibai being some five hundred and sixty miles distant from Milne Bay. The languages spoken in the two places are absolutely different; and there is no ground for believing that a native of Milne Bay has ever visited Saibai, though it is possible that a Saibai man may have formed one of a crew of a pearl-shelling boat which may have sailed from Thursday Island to the extreme south-east of New Guinea.